R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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DELAWARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND MENTAL HEALTH, A DIGEST OF THE FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE STUDYING MENTAL HEALTH IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1958-63.

DELAWARE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, WILMINGTON

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DESCRIPTORS- *EXCEPTIONAL CHILD EDUCATION, *EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED, *EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, *STATE PROGRAMS, PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS, INCIDENCE, COMMUNITY PROGRAMS, MENTAL HEALTH, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, TEACHER EDUCATION, INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH COMMITTEES, PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT, PROGRAM EVALUATION, DELAWARE,

THE FINDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH IN THE DELAWARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE SUMMARIZED CONCERNING THE NUMBERS AND AGES OF EMOTIONALLY AND SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED CHILDREN, LOCAL CLINICS, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND OTHER REFERRAL AND TREATMENT FACILITIES, TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS, PARENT PROBLEMS, AND WAYS IN WHICH OTHER COMMUNITIES MEET THE PROBLEM. THE PILOT PROJECTS, WORKSHOPS, AND STUDY GROUPS CONDUCTED BY THE COMMITTEE ARE DESCRIBED. TWELVE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE PRESENTED, AND THE COMMITTEE'S MEMBERS ARE LISTED. (JW)

Duplicate

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DELAWARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND MENTAL HEALTH

A digest of the final report of the Committee Studying Mental Health in the Public Schools, 1958-63

EC 001 206

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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DELAWARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND MENTAL HEALTH

A Digest of the Final Report

DELAWARE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Advisory Council for Exceptional Children .....Vera Davis, *Chairman*

Sub-Committee Studying Mental Health in The Public Schools .....Evelyn Young, *Chairman*

WILMINGTON: 1964

NOTE:

The full report of this committee includes exhibits of materials and plans used in two summer courses at the University of Delaware and in public forums held throughout the state, as well as a much fuller report of the committee's work and recommendations.

Understandably, it is long and cumbersome and not apt to be read. We would like to reach as many interested and concerned Delawareans as possible. This digest is meant to serve that purpose. It does not replace the original study, copies of which are available to anyone interested. Contact the Division of Exceptional Children and Youth, State Department of Public Instruction, Dover, Delaware.

HOW IT STARTED —

In the winter of 1957-58 The Advisory Council for Exceptional Children set up a sub-committee to study mental health in the public schools. The committee was to cooperate "in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive long range program of mental health in the public schools."

Educators in public and independent schools, from kindergarten through the university level, school psychologists, guidance counselors, practicing psychiatrists, parents, staff and members of the Mental Health Association of Delaware, and members of the American Association of University Women comprised the committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. James H. Young.

The Sears-Roebuck Foundation provided the bulk of the funds for the support of the study.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE DID —

I. *Surveyed the situation by:*

A. Getting a census of the emotionally disturbed children who were identified, referred, and treated during a specific three-year period.

B. Surveying the private and public facilities available to serve emotionally disturbed children.

C. Examining the teacher training programs available here and elsewhere.

D. Studying ways this problem has been met in other parts of the United States (both by departments of education and in other ways).

E. Learning about the local situation by means of questionnaires and interviews with school counselors, nurses, and administrators.

F. Reviewing much of the current literature.

II. *Conducted pilot projects, work shops, and study groups.*

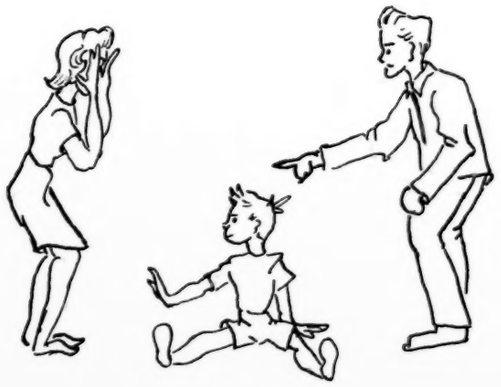
A. Summer of 1960. A two-week course at the University of Delaware: Ed. 562, "Social and Emotional Adjustment of Children," Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs. Fifty-two people took the

course; thirty-seven of these were Delaware teachers.

B. Summer of 1961. A two-week course at the University of Delaware: Ed. 504K, "The Troubled and Troublesome Child," Dr. Harold Mosak. Forty-seven people enrolled in the course; thirty-two of these were Delaware teachers.

C. From September 1959 to March 31, 1962. Ten workshops, demonstrations, and lectures held in various schools. Approximately 3,000 parents and 400 teachers, administrators, counselors, and psychologists attended. Speakers for these meetings included: Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs, Dr. Bina Rosenberg, and Dr. Harold Mosak of the Adler Institute in Chicago and Drs. Marguerite and Willard Beecher from the Adler Institute in New York City.

D. From the spring of 1960 until the present time. "Living-in-a-family" discussion groups have been meeting in private homes. Some groups include mothers only, others are "Couple's Groups." Each group has about twelve members, one or two experienced leaders, and meets regularly at weekly or bi-weekly intervals for ten meetings. Some groups, however, have been in existence for more than three years.



WHAT THE COMMITTEE FOUND —

I. Approximately 1% of the Wilmington city school population and 2½% of the state school population were reported on the State School Census because of social and emotional maladjustment. Delaware law provides that each year a school must report to the State Department of Public Instruction all "exceptional" children. Socially and emotionally maladjusted children as well as those with physical exceptionalities are reported. A survey of the period since 1955 shows:

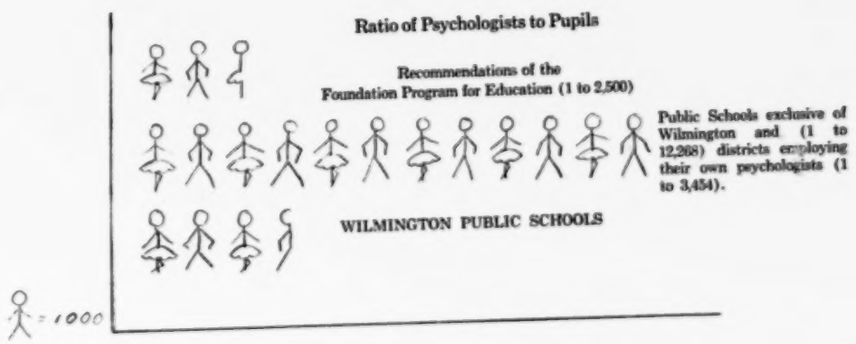
School Year	Total School Enrollment in Delaware	No. of Emotionally Disturbed Children Reported on the School Census
1955-56	61,921	1,420
1956-57	65,915	1,497
1957-58	69,342	1,284
1958-59	73,551	1,774
1959-60	77,761	2,104
1960-61	84,464	2,425
1961-62	88,826	2,669
1962-63	91,490	2,271

II. The majority of disturbed children referred are between the ages of 6 and 11. Many children bring their problems to school with them. Also the organization of elementary school is more conducive to identification and referral. Teachers are with children all day and each child usually has only one teacher.

III. Private agencies appear to treat, at least to some extent, almost all children referred to them.

IV. The Division of Child Development and Guidance of the Wilmington Public Schools has school psychologists available at the ratio of one psychologist to every 3,454 pupils. This school district also has four social workers and a part time psychiatrist, but they are still not able to care for the students referred to them to the extent that they would like.

AVAILABILITY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES IN SCHOOLS


Ratio of Psychologists to Pupils
Recommendations of the Foundation Program for Education (1 to 2,500)
Public Schools exclusive of Wilmington and (1 to 12,268) districts employing their own psychologists (1 to 3,454).
WILMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
= 1000

V. Several individual school districts in northern New Castle County have school psychologists on

their staffs. They are paid entirely from local funds. In these cases, the psychologist to pupil ratio is more in line with the recommendations of The Foundation Program for Education (one psychologist for 2,500 students), but many students are still referred to private psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, or agencies with such people on their staffs.

VI. The Division of Exceptional Children and Youth of the State Department of Public Instruction is the principal referral agency for most public schools. This division averages five psychologists who work out of Georgetown, Dover, and Wilmington. Here is a psychologist-pupil ratio of 1 to 12,268. There are no social workers on the staff.

A large part of the work of these state school psychologists is devoted to identifying retarded children. Some diagnosing of emotional illness is possible, but these psychologists do not have time to do necessary follow-up work with parents, teachers, and children. Most cases result in a written report only or, in some instances, a written report and a referral to the local Mental Hygiene Clinic.

VII. The Mental Hygiene Clinic, which gets many of the referrals from school nurses and school psychologists, has a long waiting list and is the only available facility to which many schools can

turn. This is especially true in Kent and Sussex counties.

VIII. There are waiting periods of up to 9 months between the time a youngster is referred and the time treatment is started.

IX. There is a woeful lack of standardization of mental health terms not only among the various organizations studied, but also in general. For example: What is "treatment"? How does one distinguish between a "disturbing" child and a "disturbed" child?

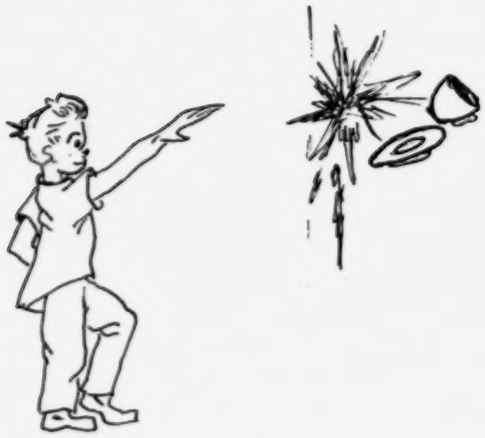
X. Communication among and within institutions is poor. Much information which could be of value to the school never reaches the school from other agencies. Frequently there is duplication of examination and diagnosis with no time for treatment.

XI. Delaware is a popular training field for professional people in the field of mental health—they soon leave for more remunerative positions elsewhere.

XII. Teacher training, with its "human growth and development" approach has provided the classroom teacher with very little that is useful in actually working with emotionally disturbed children or in developing a consciousness of mental health.

XIII. Teachers, nurses, and administrators, frequently lacking professional criteria upon which to base judgments, make referrals in a very haphazard manner. The disturbing child who is making life hard for school people is more apt to be referred than is the child who is really disturbed. The latter at times must wait until he does something which attracts adverse attention.

XIV. All agencies working with children feel that the parents and family play very important roles in the mental health of a child.



XV. Parents are in most cases "flying blind" and are baffled by interpersonal relationships within the family, while at the same time they are very eager for valid information, concrete practical suggestions, and a chance to discuss.

XVI. In a number of places throughout the country programs of family counseling and group coun-

seling are being run successfully. In 1959-60 the idea of working with people in groups rather than individually was not accepted very widely. This procedure does, however, appear to be gaining in status and popularity, in some places very rapidly.

XVII. The concept of a *preventative* program in mental health is almost non-existent in most Delaware public schools. "Guidance" classes, home-living classes, and regular health classes may include units dealing with aspects of mental health, but the role of the total educational picture in the development of individual mental health is not widely recognized.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS—

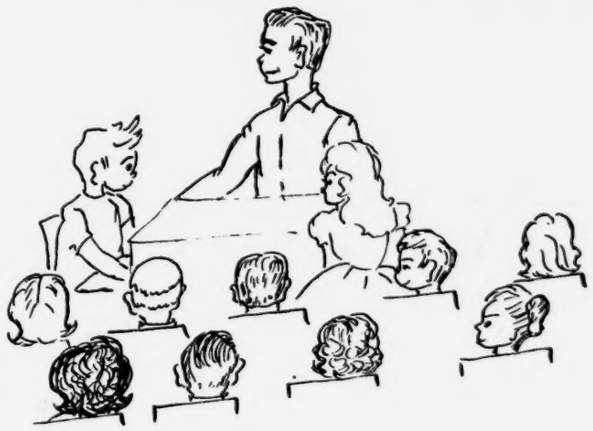
I. Services within communities be expanded so that children in need of therapy do not have to wait a long time to begin treatment.

II. Provision be made for additional qualified personnel within the school structure. Local school administrators can do very little about this without financial aid from the Legislature and/or local referenda.

III. Qualified professional in-service training of teachers be provided in two areas: the development of facility in the early identification of apparently troubled children, and the development of techniques for dealing with day-to-day situations and minor crises.

IV. The University of Delaware (which is to be commended for already taking steps in this direction) press forward in developing an integrated program covering psychology, education,

and sociology which in turn might train its School of Education students to deal more realistically with mental health in the school classroom. Delaware teachers are in the unique position of having summer courses free-of-charge. If, because of low salaries, we have difficulty recruiting and holding trained professional people, the possibility of a vigorous university-level training program of people already in our schools should be considered.



V. Attention be given to a mental health *educational* program which involves parents, children, teachers, and administrators.

VI. Communities consider the feasibility of establishing Family Counseling Centers for education in the matter of person-to-person and person-to-group relationships. Attention be drawn to such Centers which are operating effectively in Oregon, Texas, Iowa, Illinois, New York, and in Israel, Greece, and Denmark, and which are now being developed in other places.

VII. The State Board of Education work with the Division of Adult Education and other appropriate divisions to implement parent education in this area.

VIII. The Mental Health Association establish outposts which would furnish services over a wider area and to which school referrals could be made.

IX. The findings and recommendations embodied in the publication "Interim Policies for the Education of Emotionally Handic:· ped Children" (1962, State Department of Children" (1962) Public Instruction) be implemented.

X. School psychologists and psychologically oriented guidance personnel be encouraged in the broad use of group counseling techniques, classroom observation of children referred, and parent and teacher counseling sessions.

XI. School administrators be charged with the duty of coordinating and evaluating mental health programs in their districts. The Committee feels

that implementation of sections of the Mort Report would facilitate this.

XII. The State Board of Education recognizes the need for responsible and creative leadership in coordinating a multi-dimensional program for mental health in the public schools.

And last, but by no means least, this committee concurs with the American Psychiatric Association's recommendation that:

"Additional clinical psychologists and trained counselors are needed generally in all schools."

COMMITTEE

A committee which functions for a period of five years has many changes in its membership. During part or all of this period the following Delawareans have been members of the Committee Studying Mental Health in the Public Schools.

MR. MERTON BERGER, *Executive Director, Mental Health Association of Delaware*

MISS MARGUERITE BURNETT, *former Director of Curriculum, Wilmington Public Schools and Adult Education, State Department of Public Instruction*

MR. JOHN S. CHARLTON, *Director, Division of Exceptional Children and Youth, State Department of Public Instruction*

MRS. HARRY CRIPPS, *teacher, Hockessin*

MRS. VERA DAVIS, *Chairman, Advisory Council for Exceptional Children*

MRS. MILTON DEWEY, *Parent Study Group leader.*

DR. HARRY O. EISENBERG, *Chief School Officer, Rose Hill-Minquadale School District*

DR. LEON FARRIN, *former Supt. Schools, Lewes*

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MR. CHARLES HAEGELE, *Principal, Carrie Downie School, New Castle*

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MR. WALTER KABIS, *Director, Civil Defense Adult Education, State Dept. of Public Instruction*

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MRS. PAUL KELLOGG, *wife of Rector, Christ Episcopal Church, Dover*

MRS. H. STETSON KINKAID, *Psychologist, Division of Exceptional Children and Youth, State Dept. of Public Instruction*

MRS. JACKSON LEE, *parent, Wilmington*

MRS. JOSEPH S. C. MACH, *AAUW, Seaford*

MRS. MARIAN B. MILLER, *Supervisor of Testing, State Dept. of Public Instruction*

MR. THOMAS MULROONEY, *Director, Div. of Child Development and Guidance, Wilmington Public Schools*

DR. ARTHUR NELSON, *Chief School Officer, Alfred I. duPont School District*

DR. LEROY OLSON, *Admin. Asst. for Pupil Personnel Services, Alfred I. duPont School District*

MRS. CHARLES OTTO, *Supervisor of Kindergarten, Newark*

MRS. GRACE PAUL, *Volunteer, Mental Health Ass'n*

DR. RICHARD PRICE, *Psychiatrist, Wilmington*

MRS. LOIS RYAN, *Associate Director, Mental Health Ass'n of Delaware*

MR. ROY SCHREFFLER, *Psychologist, Alfred I. duPont School District*

DR. ALFRED SCHWARTZ, *School of Education, University of Delaware*

MR. HARVEY STAHL, *former Supt. Claymont Special School District, Claymont*

MRS. DEAN C. STEELE, *member Advisory Committee, Woodshaven School*

MRS. NORRIS THOMAS, *parent, former School Board member, Krebs School*

MRS. ERNEST THORN, *former Supervisor, Delaware Pre-School Kindergarten*

MRS. ALEX ULIN, *committee treasurer, Claymont*

MR. & MRS. JAMES VEST, JR., *study group leaders, Alfred I. duPont School District*

MRS. JONATHAN WILLIAMS, *AAUW, Wilmington*

MRS. DELBERT WILSON, *parent, Rehoboth*

MRS. JAMES H. YOUNG, *Chairman of Committee Studying Mental Health in the Public Schools,*

The committee expresses appreciation to Adelaide Toy for secretarial aid and sustaining interest in the project, to Ruth Clark for the lively illustrations, and to Mr. John Charlton for his friendly cooperation in the last five years.

NOTE:

Additional information regarding pamphlets, books, and other material developed or found useful by the committee and questions about the organization of new study groups may be had by calling Mrs. James H. Young (478-0352), Mrs. Milton Dewey (PO 4-1958), or Mr. James Vest (PO 4-2847).

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